

Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1943

UNCLAS MEXICO 11208

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJ: CASE REVIEW OF ALL AMERICAN PRISONERS IN MEXICO:

GREGG, DONNY JOE

REF: STATE 194199

1. CONSULAR ACCESS: GREGG ARRESTED JANUARY 17, 1974. EMBASSY LEARNED OF ARREST THROUGH NEWSPAPERS. AT FIRST INTERVIEW, JANUARY 29, GREGG TOLD CONOFF HE HAD REQUESTED CALL EMBASSY BUT WAS REFUSED. PROMPT ACCESS TO ARRESTEES CONTINUES TO BE MAJOR EMBASSY CONCERN.

2. MISTREATMENT/EXTORTION IN PRISON: AT INITIAL VISIT, WHEN GREGG ALREADY AT LECUMBERRI, HE COMPLAINED TO CONOFF HE WAS BEING BEATEN AND MISTREATED, AND THAT FOUR AMERICANS WERE FORCED TO SLEEP ON CONCRETE FLOOR AS HARASSMENT DESIGNED TO EXTORT MONEY FROM THEM. CONOFF PROMISED TO TAKE UP MATTER WITH PRISON ADMINISTRATION, BUT THERE IS NO INDICATION IN FILE THAT HE DID. NOTE OF SAME DATE INDICATES THAT CONOFF MENTIONED MATTER OF AMERICANS FORCED TO SLEEP ON FLOOR WITH MRS. MATEOS (AN AMERICAN WOMAN WHO INTERESTED HERSELF IN PRISONER WELFARE), AND THAT SHE PROMISED TO SPEAK TO PRISON AUTHORITIES IMMEDIATELY. EMBASSY FILES INDICATE CONOFF SAW GREGG AUGUST 21, 1974, AT WHICH TIME
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PRISONER HAD BEEN BADLY BEATEN. CONOFF REPORT SAYS

"HIS EYES WERE BLACK, HIS FACE BRUISED AND HIS MOUTH STILL BLEEDING." EMBASSY FILES INDICATE GREGG SAID HE WAS BEATEN BY OTHER PRISONERS (TRUSTEES) BECAUSE HE HAD NOT PAID EXTORTION. PRISONER SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED CONOFF NOT TO PROTEST TO MEXICAN AUTHORITIES ABOUT INCIDENT. A MEXICAN MAYOR, STANDING WITHIN LISTENING DISTANCE OF PRISONER, SAID THAT GREGG AND SOME OTHERS HAD "PUT ON THE GLOVES" TO SETTLE AND ALTERCATION IN THE CELLBLOCK. GREGG TOLD SAME STORY TO HIS FAMILY. EMBASSY FILES SHOW THAT SEVERAL CALLS WERE RECEIVED FROM INTERESTED PARTIES IN US ON OCTOBER 4, 1974, OWING TO REPORTS EMANATING FROM GREGG'S BROTHER THAT GREGG'S HEAD HAD BEEN QUOTE SPLIT OPEN UNQUOTE AND THAT HE HAD BEEN REFUSED MEDICAL CARE. BROTHER WOULD NOT GIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION, WHICH FILES SHOW CONOFF DOUBTED OWING TO OTHER SIMILAR REPORTS WHICH HAD TURNED OUT TO BE FALSE. CONOFF CHECKED WITH PRISON AUTHORITIES AND SAW GREGG OCTOBER 8. GREGG TOLD HIM THAT THREE WEEKS EARLIER MEXICAN INMATE MALICIOUSLY SLAMMED DOOR ON HIM, BREAKING SKIN ABOVE LEFT EYEBROW. HE ASKED FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT BUT WAS REFUSED. CUT HAD HEALED AFTER BEING COVERED WITH BANDAID. AT SAME INTERVIEW, GREGG COMPLAINED OF EXTORTION BY OTHER INMATES. DURING MARCH 5, 1975, VISIT, GREGG TOLD CONOFF HE WANTED RECORD TO SHOW THAT HE HAD BEEN BEATEN UP BY SEVEN MEXICANS WHEN HE ARRIVED AT SANTA MARTA PRISON IN FEBRUARY. HE DID NOT WANT PROTEST MADE. DURING APRIL VISIT, GREGG COMPLAINED OF LACK OF VITAMINS AND GENERAL VIOLATIONS OF HIS RIGHTS. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO SIGN AFFIDAVIT TO BE PRESENTED TO MEXICAN GOVERNMENT SAYING THAT HE WAS BEATEN INTO SIGNING DECLARATION (PRESUMABLY AT TIME OF ARREST). IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER AFFIDAVIT IS SUPPOSED TO BE USED AS PROTEST OR AS EVIDENCE IN APPEAL. CONOFF WILL LOOK INTO MATTER NEXT VISIT. EMBASSY IS NOW DISTRIBUTING DONATED VITAMINS.

3. COMMISSIONED WORK FOR REDUCTION OF SENTENCE:
EMBASSY FILE INDICATES PRISONER REPORTED TO CONOFF
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DIFFICULTY IN GETTING JOB COMMISSION AFTER SPEAKING WITH DIRECTOR OF PRISON REGARDING THREE DIFFERENT JOBS AND BEING REFUSED. PRISONER IS NOW IN COMMISSIONED WORK PROGRAM AND HAS MADE NO COMPLAINTS REGARDING CREDIT FOR HIS WORK.
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